Bristol Hospital Orthopedist, Dr. David Rubins, Offers New Approach to Hip Replacement

For the last several years, the "direct anterior" approach to hip replacement surgery has generated a lot of excitement, with both surgeons and patients. Dr. David Rubins is now offering this exciting new procedure to patients at Bristol Hospital.

To perform the procedure, patients are no longer positioned on the operating table on their sides (the "posterior" approach), but instead turned onto their backs in a supine position (the "direct anterior" approach), which provides much easier access to the hip joint by the orthopedic surgeon.

"Typically, we would go behind the femur bone in the hip, which was the way it's been done for the last 50 years," said Dr. Rubins. But now, the anterior approach gives the surgeon direct access to the front of the hip bone.

"It turns out that if you go right through the front of the hip, you can separate the muscles without any cutting and spread them apart, and then on the way out, the muscles automatically realign themselves as you close the incision. You literally don't have to cut one muscle or one tendon with this procedure," Dr. Rubins adds.

However, not everyone is a candidate for the anterior approach. Dr. Rubins explains that the best candidates are those patients who have an average to slim body structure, and who have relatively thin legs and thighs, with good muscle tone and good bone quality.

"It doesn't really matter what age the patient is, as long as they are relatively active, with good muscle tone and strong bones (no osteoporosis)," explains Dr. Rubins. In addition, the risks associated with anterior hip replacement are no more than with the traditional procedure, and probably less, considering the less invasive nature of the new procedure.

Dr. Rubins has seen the benefits of the direct anterior approach to hip replacement surgery firsthand with his patients, and he states that patients experience greatly improved function within a matter of weeks after the surgery (instead of the months it may take to see them with the traditional approach).

These benefits include:

- Faster recovery and return to normal activities
- Return to driving usually within two weeks
- Usually return to the comforts of your own home versus a Rehabilitation Center
- Less pain
- Procedure performed under Spinal Anesthesia with Sedation versus General Anesthesia
- Shorter hospital stay
- Much less muscle and tendon disturbance due to no cutting
- Less bone invasion (due to the implant being about half the size as the ones used in the traditional "posterior" approach
- The replacement lasts as long or longer than traditional hip replacement (can potentially last up to 25 years, Dr. Rubins estimates)

To learn more about the direct anterior approach to hip replacement, you can reach Dr. Rubins at the following office location:

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